

Executive 4-50-14

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22 JAN 1959

CONFIDENTIAL

Victor Bator, Esq.

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Dear Victor:

Thank you for your kind letter of January 5 on the Pasternak case, and for the copy of Edmund Wilson's New Yorker review of Dr. Zhivago. According to our information Dr. Zhivago in fact has been or is being translated into more than 20 languages, among them Polish, Serbian, Finnish, Chinese and several Indian tongues.

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STAT DATE: 1963-81 REVIEWER 

Sincerely,

SIGNED

Allen W. D.  
Director

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PP/PROP/MB:  w (12 Jan. 1959)

"P. S. I hope we can get together soon.

A. W. D."

25X1

Distribution:

Orig - Addressee

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Signature Recommended:

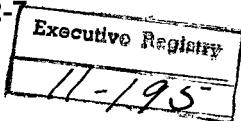
12 JAN 1959

Deputy Director (Plans)

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13

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January 5, 1959

CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Allen:

I have not written to you or seen you for more than two years. That is a long enough interruption to permit me to write to you without any severe self-reproach for claiming too much of your time. Of course, I am not writing this letter just for this reason. What I have in mind has probably occurred to others, but in case it has not, I feel I should bring it to your attention.

The idea is in connection with the Pasternak-case. By the build-up Pasternak has received I believe that it is not exaggerated to consider him as the foremost Russian intellectual figure of our time. Moreover, this is combined with the fact that he is the only Russian who lives in the Soviet Union and yet succeeded in asserting his spiritual independence. He had been known before his excommunication as one of the two great poets of the Soviets, but "Doctor Zhivago" has given him a prominence that is not equalled by anyone else. Also, the book is a remarkable artistic achievement and it is the first description of the Russian revolution not by an emigré Russian or Western historian but by a top-ranking Soviet artist whose work casts more light on the inhuman destructiveness of the Bolshevik Revolution than volumes of factual material -- were it accessible.

I think that "Doctor Zhivago", if read by people who have been and are being treated extensively to the Soviet ideology, may considerably widen and deepen the realization of discrepancy between dogma and truth, and thereby add to the source of intrinsic strain of the intellectuals behind the Iron Curtain. Thus the Socrates-like gesture of Pasternak refusing the haven of exile and the safe enjoyment of fat royalties abroad, further, the artistic value of "Doctor Zhivago" may make the book a factor of major political importance.

I know that the book has been translated into the main European languages and is going to be published in Italy in Russian. It may be of great importance, however, to have the book translated into Czech, Serbian, Bulgarian, Rumanian, Hungarian, Finnish, Turkish, the different Indian dialects, Japanese, Chinese etc. and channel it into the hands of the people in their native tongue. In countries outside of the Iron Curtain this could be done openly by making the book available at a nominal price to the reading public. Behind

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the Iron Curtain distribution would pose a more difficult problem, but the book could be trickled into those countries where each copy might be read by many hundreds.

Since the book would be aimed at the top intellectual layer of each nation, the translation ought to be done by leading literary figures whose name would add to the significance of the publication. Such artists are available for all the suggested languages and they should be entrusted with the task of the translation even if this meant some delay in the finalizing of the project. It would be worthwhile to retain an eminent aesthete like Edmund Wilson to select the translators and to check on the quality of the result.

You may be interested in Edmund Wilson's review of "Doctor Zhivago" published by the New Yorker. It is a beautifully written and inspiring article. You will find it enclosed. (*Not enclosed*),

Sincerely yours,

*With best personal greetings*

Victor Bator *Victor*

Allen W. Dulles, Esq.  
Director  
Central Intelligence Agency  
2430 E Street  
Washington 25, D.C.

*SECRET*

*Get to ER 11-195*

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January 6, 1959

Allen W. Dulles, Esq.  
Director  
Central Intelligence Agency  
2430 E Street  
Washington 25, D.C.

Dear Sir:

By mistake the enclosure to Mr. Victor Bator's letter of January 5th was not mailed in the same envelope. I am sending the article of Mr. Edmund Wilson enclosed.

Yours very truly,

*Gene Reeks*

Sec'y to Mr. Bator

*RECEIVED*

*B*